

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended.

Claims 1-2 and 5-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Pittman, or under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Pittman.

Pittman discloses cellulose fibers held together by polyolefin binder fibers. An enhancement agent – titanium dioxide, talc, silica, alum, calcium carbonate, calcium oxide, magnesium and other oxides – is dispersed within the polymer. See the paragraph beginning on line 15 of column 4. “The particle size, in order to achieve good dispersion within the polymer and good spinnability is in the range of 0.04 to about 5 microns, and preferably in the range of 0.05 to 2 microns. [emphasis added]”

The binder fiber is mixed with cellulose fibers and the mixture is heat treated to bond the binder fiber to the cellulose fibers and to each other.

The claims have been amended to recite that the retention aid is a water soluble polymer. This language may be found in the paragraph beginning on line 29 of page 2 of the specification.

The examiner has stated that the polyamides of Pittman et al are water soluble. The examiner’s basis for this statement is his belief that applicant has admitted on lines 1-5 of page 3 that polyamides are water soluble. The only polyamides mentioned by Pittman et al are nylon 6 and nylon 66, which are used as the high melt portion of a bicomponent binder fiber. Applicant has not admitted on page 3 or anywhere else in the application that nylon 6 or nylon 66 is water soluble. Applicant knows of no reference that states that nylon 6 or nylon 66 is water soluble.

There is a difference between the polyacrylamides mentioned in lines 1-5 on page 3 of the application and the nylons mentioned in Pittman et al. If Google is checked it will be found that nylon 6 has a repeating unit of $-\text{NH}-\text{CO}-(\text{CH}_2)_5-$ and that nylon 66 has a repeating unit of $-\text{[NH}-(\text{CH}_2)_6-\text{NH}-\text{CO}-(\text{CH}_2)_4-\text{CO}-]-$. In both of these the nitrogen and the carbon attached to the oxygen are part of the polymer backbone. It will also be found that the acrylamide repeating unit has only carbon as the backbone. The amide group (NH_2) and the CO group are on a side chain. The CO group is attached to a carbon on the backbone and the amide group is attached to the CO group. The chemistries of a polyamide and a polyacrylamide are not the same.

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being unpatentable over Pittman et al in view of Hochwalt. Hochwalt is cited for the disclosure of zeolites. Again Pittman et al does not disclose a water soluble polymer retention aid and the addition of Hochwalt does disclose this either.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn and the case passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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